

Extension Cords on Docks and at the Lake

The following safety guidelines should be carefully considered wherever extension cords of any type are considered for used in, on, over, or near lakes, rivers, or other bodies of water. Compliance with these recommendations will significantly reduce the risk of an electric shock drowning or in-water electrocution. Compliance does not, in any case, result in a condition where it may be deemed "safe" to be in the water.

Application and Usage

- General purpose/utility extension cords are designed, intended, and listed for use where connected to 15- or 20-Amp, 125-Volt convenience receptacles.
- General purpose/utility extension cords should not be connected to any receptacle where the overcurrent protection is greater than 20 amperes, even though adapters might be available for the purpose.
- General purpose extension cords are intended for use only for temporary, task-oriented applications. They are not to be used as a substitute for permanent wiring, or for semi-permanent or long term use.
- General purpose extension cords are not be attached to building surfaces or other structures.
- General purpose extension cords intended for use outdoors are specifically identified and marked for such use. A permanent tag attached to the cord when purchased will indicate the uses permitted.
- General purpose extension cord conductors should be adequately sized to the load served (i.e. 12-, 14-, 16-gauge). 18-gauge extension cords are no longer manufactured and should not be used.
- Where used near water, it is recommended that general purpose extension cords be connected (plugged into) receptacles that include integral GFCI protection, or receptacles that are marked as being protected by an upstream GFCI device (receptacle or circuit breaker).
- Do not place extension cords over sharp edges (such as the metal framing on docks) or where they could be pinched or crushed.
- Where used near water, it is recommended that the GFCI protection be tested, and reset, before each use.
- General purpose extension cords and their plugs and connectors should never be permitted to dangle in the water or placed in any way that could enable them to fall into the water.
- General purpose extension cords should always be disconnected, removed, properly coiled, and stored upon completion of the task for which the cord was required.
- General purpose/utility extension cords are not permitted to be used for shore power applications and should never be used to establish the connection between any shore power outlet and a boat's shore power inlet, with or without adapters, when the boat is afloat.

General Condition

- Where used, extension cords must be in good repair; free from modifications, splices, excessive wear, damage, cracks, abrasion, burns, etc. Do not use cords that have had plugs and connectors replaced.
- Extension cords with worn, damaged or missing grounding terminals should not be used.
- Avoid the use of two-wire, non-grounding type extension cords.
- Do not use "home-made" or user-repaired extension cords.
- Daisy-chaining of extension cords is discouraged, and may be prohibited by the cord's instructions.
- Damaged extension cords should be removed from service, destroyed, and properly disposed.

Review the Electric Shock Drowning Prevention Association brochure and other electrical safety materials available at www.electricschockdrowning.org and www.electricschockdrowningmn.com .

DISCLAIMER

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